January 27, 2020

TO: Members of the Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization (County Committee)

FROM: Keith D. Crafton, Secretary
County Committee

SUBJECT: Cancellation of the February 5, 2020, Meeting of the County Committee

The regular meeting of the County Committee scheduled for Wednesday, February 5, 2020, has been CANCELLED. The next scheduled meeting of the County Committee is for Wednesday, March 4, 2020, at 9:30 a.m.

The following is an update of information and activities as of January 23, 2020.

Staff Activities

Staff are guiding districts that are in various stages of their trustee area and trustee area voting proposals related to the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA).

Staff are working with the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (Registrar-Recorder) to put in place new trustee area maps in advance of the November 2020 elections, based on several districts being approved by the County Committee to change to trustee area elections.

Staff have added new articles on the County Committee website, many of which include recent developments related to CVRA.

Staff are assisting districts that are preparing to submit petitions related to school district organization.

Legislation Updates

Staff are monitoring particular proposals as discussed at the January meeting. (Attachment 1)

School District Organization Proposals

Updated versions of these two documents are provided for your information.

- “Summary of Los Angeles Unified School District Re-organization Proposals.” (Attachment 2)
“Summary of Los Angeles Unified School District Re-organization Proposals.” (excluding those affecting the Los Angeles Unified School District) (Attachment 3)

If you have questions, please call me at (562) 922-6131.

KDC/AD/EH:ah
Attachments
Attachment 1

LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION (COUNTY COMMITTEE)
LEGISLATIVE REVIEW – FEBRUARY 2020

BILL NUMBER/AUTHOR:
Senate Bill 212 / Allen

INTRODUCTION DATE:
02/04/19

LAST ACTIVITY/DATE:
01/13/20 – Governor’s veto sustained

DESCRIPTION OF BILL

This bill would authorize a city, county, or local educational agency to conduct an election using ranked choice voting, in which voters rank the candidates for office in order of preference, as specified.

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF BILL ON LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE, SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION PROCESS AND/OR LOS ANGELES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

This bill could have a large impact on Los Angeles County school districts who receive a demand letter to implement trustee area voting, depending whether the parties agree on ranked choice voting being a viable alternative. The impact is also contingent upon whether the County Registrar of Voters certifies whether the required balloting mechanisms are in place to support the ranking choice voting alternative.

RECOMMENDED POSITION

Staff recommends the following position:

☑️ Watch Bill should be monitored by County Committee staff, but no action taken at this time.
☐ Approve County Committee supports the bill’s concept, but will not actively work for passage.
☐ Support County Committee actively supports the bill.
☐ Oppose County Committee actively opposes the bill.
☐ Disapprove County Committee disapproves of the bill’s concept, but will not actively oppose passage.
DESCRIPTION OF BILL

This bill would prohibit any school district organization action from converting any portion of any territory of a unified school district into territory of any other type of school district.

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF BILL ON LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE, SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION PROCESS AND/OR LOS ANGELES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

This bill would likely have a significant impact on territory transfer petitions between elementary and high school districts, when seeking to transfer territory out of a unified school district.

RECOMMENDED POSITION

Staff recommends the following position:

☑️ Watch  Bill should be monitored by County Committee staff, but no action taken at this time.
☐ Approve  County Committee supports the bill’s concept, but will not actively work for passage.
☐ Support  County Committee actively supports the bill.
☐ Oppose  County Committee actively opposes the bill.
☐ Disapprove  County Committee disapproves of the bill’s concept, but will not actively oppose passage.

AMENDMENTS REQUIRED

If staff’s recommended position is based on the need for amendments to the bill language, suggested alternative language is attached.

CORRESPONDENCE REQUIRED

If staff’s recommended position is based on the need for correspondence to the bill’s author, the Governor or other governmental officials, a draft of suggested language is attached.

Please direct all comments to Mr. Keith D. Crafton, Secretary to the County Committee at (562) 922-6131
Summary of Los Angeles Unified School District Reorganization Proposals

February 2020

The following is a summary of school district reorganization proposals affecting the Los Angeles Unified School District (USD) that were at various stages in the school district organization process as of January 23, 2020.

PETITION TO TRANSFER TERRITORY FROM THE LOS ANGELES USD (LAUSD) TO PALOS VERDES PENINSULA USD (PVPUSD)

On July 10, 2019, Chadmar/Colfin Rolling Hills LLC submitted an owner petition to transfer five parcels of uninhabited territory from LAUSD to PVPUSD. At the September 4, 2019, regularly scheduled County Committee meeting, the petition was to be introduced to the County Committee. However, Chadmar’s new counsel, David Soldani, addressed the County Committee and requested that the petition be withdrawn at this time, and that it would be resubmitted.

Status: Petition temporarily withdrawn, to be resubmitted
Status Date: *September 18, 2019

RECENT INQUIRIES REGARDING REORGANIZATION (within the last two years)

Formation Proposals/Last Activity Date

- *Inner City USD / January 2020

Transfer of Territory Proposals/Last Activity Date

- LAUSD to Palos Verdes Peninsula USD / September 2019

* = indicates activity since last meeting

This document was prepared by staff to the County Committee.
Summary of Los Angeles County School District Reorganization Proposals
(Excluding those affecting the Los Angeles Unified School District)

February 2020

The following is a summary of school district reorganization proposals [exclusive of those affecting the Los Angeles Unified School District (USD)] that are at various stages in the school district reorganization process as of January 23, 2020.

PETITION TO TRANSFER TERRITORY FROM TORRANCE USD TO PALOS VERDES PENINSULA USD (PVPUSD)

On June 3, 2019, the Torrance USD and PVPUSD submitted a joint petition to transfer twenty-nine parcels from Torrance USD to PVPUSD. The petition was introduced to the County Committee at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 4, 2019, and public hearings were held in each school district on October 16, 2019. A feasibility study will be conducted which will be presented to the County Committee at a future meeting.

Status: Feasibility study being conducted
Status Date: *January 23, 2020

PETITION TO TRANSFER TERRITORIES BETWEEN THE SULPHUR SPRINGS UNION SD AND THE SAUGUS UNION SD

On March 6, 2019, the Sulphur Springs Union School District (SD) submitted their final board resolution as part of a series of resolutions spanning the past eleven years, culminating in the formal introduction of a petition to transfer (exchange) certain parcels between Sulphur Springs Union SD and Saugus Union SD. Public hearings were held in each district on May 2, 2019, both of which are within the William S. Hart Union High School District (HSD). A feasibility study was conducted, and was presented to the County Committee at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 4, 2019. The committee then preliminarily approved the petition so the committee’s own environmental study may be conducted, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The petition shall be held until its CEQA study is concluded and a CEQA public hearing is conducted, after which the committee will reconvene to provide a final vote on the matter.

Status: CEQA study to be conducted
Status Date: *January 23, 2020
FORMATION—MALIBU USD (CURRENTLY LIES WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE SANTA MONICA-MALIBU USD)

On September 1, 2017, LACOE received a petition in the form of a 2015 resolution from the City of Malibu to form a separate Malibu USD from territory within the boundaries of the existing Santa Monica-Malibu USD. The petition was introduced at the November 1, 2017 regular County Committee meeting, and at least one public hearing will be scheduled. After this local agency petition was introduced, however, the City of Malibu sent a letter requesting that the County Committee postpone the scheduling of its preliminary hearing to allow the stakeholders more time to discuss further options and details regarding the petition. On February 28, 2018, however, the City of Malibu apprised the committee of their interest in pursuing the preliminary public hearing. Then, in April 2018, the City resolved to further investigate options before asking the County Committee to proceed. At its May 2, 2018 regular meeting, the County Committee voted to delay scheduling the preliminary public hearing until after getting an update on negotiations at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 5, 2018. On September 5, 2018, representatives from the City of Malibu and the Santa Monica-Malibu USD apprised the County Committee of their negotiations, and again at the March 6, 2019 meeting. On May 10, 2019, staff met with the district to ascertain the status of its ongoing study and analyses. The parties to the petition returned to the committee on September 4, 2019, October 2, 2019, November 6, 2019, and January 8, 2020 to provide updates on their studies.

Status: Preliminary public hearing to be scheduled, pending negotiations
Status Date: *January 23, 2020

PETITION TO TRANSFER TERRITORY FROM THE GLENDALE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (USD) TO THE LA CANADA USD

On November 23, 2015, LACOE received a request for a petition pursuant to EC §35700, to transfer certain territory from the Glendale USD to the La Canada USD. The request was submitted by chief petitioners Ms. Nalini Lasiewicz, Mr. Thomas G. Smith, and Mr. Nick P. Karapetian. The petition was forwarded to County Counsel to determine its legal compliance regarding format and content. On January 13, 2016, County Counsel deemed the petition sufficient. Staff returned the petition to the chief petitioners on January 15, 2016.

On June 29, 2016, the chief petitioners submitted signed petitions for review. On June 30, 2016, staff conveyed the signed petitions to the Registrar-Recorder for signature verification. On July 18, 2016, staff received notice from the Registrar-Recorder there were sufficient signatures to move the petition forward. Chief Petitioner Smith subsequently resigned from his role.
The petition was presented to the County Committee on September 7, 2016. The County Committee held two public hearings (October 26, 2016, in the La Canada USD, and November 2, 2016, in the Glendale USD). In mid-February, 2017, the two districts resumed negotiations in an attempt to find amicable solutions, but as of mid-April, were not able to resolve issues. A feasibility study was presented to the County Committee at the May 3, 2017 meeting, after which the Committee gave a preliminary approval to the proposal.

In the fall 2017, staff concluded the Request For Proposal (RFP) process, evaluated vendors, and selected an environmental consultant, for whom a contract was agreed upon. The environmental analysis concluded with the report’s comment period spanning August 30 – September 18, 2018. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Public Hearing convened on October 3, 2018, at the County Committee’s regular scheduled meeting.

The County Committee continued to review the petition. On February 20, 2019, they received a request from Dr. Kelly King, Interim Superintendent of the Glendale USD, to delay final review so she may become familiar with issues following her recent appointment. In February 2019, staff received a request from the chief petitioners that the final review of the petition not take place at the April 3, 2019 meeting because that date falls during spring break and may impact participation by the public. In April 2019, the chief petitioners requested the June meeting date be changed due to coinciding with the school year ending, which would affect parents from attending the meeting.

At the October 2, 2019 regularly scheduled meeting, the County Committee voted to accept the CEQA findings, and conducted a final vote to approve the petition, but did not approve the election area, pending the review of different election area scenarios. At the November 6, 2019, regularly scheduled meeting, the County Committee further discussed election area factors and requested additional election area maps to be reviewed at the January 8, 2020 meeting. Before the January meeting, however, litigation commenced which halted the County Committee’s process.

Status: Litigation pending
Status Date: *January 23, 2020

PETITION TO TRANSFER TERRITORY FROM THE CENTINELA VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT (HSD) AND LAWNDALE SD TO THE WISEBURN USD

On May 15, 2014, LACOE received a request for a petition pursuant to EC §35700, to transfer territory from the Centinela Valley Union HSD and the Lawndale SD to the Wiseburn USD. The request was submitted by chief petitioners Ms. Shavonda Webber-Christmas and Mr. Bill Magoon. The petition was forwarded to County Counsel to determine its legal compliance.
regarding format and content. On June 20, 2014, County Counsel deemed the petition sufficient. Staff returned the petition to the chief petitioners on June 23, 2014.

On October 15, 2014, the chief petitioners submitted signed petitions for review. On October 15, 2014, staff conveyed the signed petitions to the Registrar-Recorder for signature verification. On November 6, 2014, staff received notice from the Registrar-Recorder there were insufficient signatures to move the petition forward. Staff notified the chief petitioners, who elected to gather additional signatures. On December 4, 2014, the chief petitioners submitted additional signatures, which were submitted to the Registrar-Recorder on December 5, 2014 for signature verification. On December 22, 2014, the Registrar Recorder notified staff that the additional signatures were validated, and the petition had sufficient signatures to move forward.

The petition was presented to the County Committee on January 7, 2015. Two public hearings were held March 2, 2015, one in each of the affected districts. A feasibility study was presented on July 8, 2015, at which time the County Committee preliminarily approved the transfer, pending further collection and review of additional fiscal data, and an environmental review. Supplemental requests for information were sent to the affected districts and to the chief petitioners, with replies received from all parties. The supplemental information, and the results of a CEQA consultant’s review of the petition’s environmental impact was presented to the County Committee on May 4, 2016. Additional information brought forward on May 4, 2016, resulted in additional questions and further information gathering, after which the proposal was reexamined at the County Committee meeting on September 7, 2016. At that meeting, the proposal’s preliminary approval was affirmed, and the petition area was selected to be the voting area.

On October 5, 2016, the Lawndale SD filed a Notice of Appeal with the County Committee, and on October 18, 2016, submitted their rationale and evidence for the appeal of the County Committee’s decision. Staff forwarded the administrative record and oral recordings of the proceedings to the California Department of Education, who provided an update on January 21, 2020, that the appeal will likely be heard no sooner than Summer of 2020, pending the receipt of additional materials in Spring 2020, and barring additional scheduling challenges.

Status: Future ballot measure preparations suspended until appeal process concludes
Status Date: *January 23, 2020

FORMATION—MALIBU USD (CURRENTLY LIES WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE SANTA MONICA-MALIBU USD)

On July 23, 2015, LACOE received a request for a petition from chief petitioner Mr. Seth Jacobson, a community member who is a Malibu resident. Mr. Jacobson, along with two other chief petitioners, wants to form a separate Malibu USD from territory within the boundaries of
the existing Santa Monica-Malibu USD. Prior to the submission of any signed petitions related to this request, the City of Malibu submitted its own petition to form a Malibu USD, which was discussed earlier in this update document.

Staff reviewed the request and forwarded a draft petition to County Counsel on July 27, 2015, for a legal compliance review regarding format and content. We received notification on July 30, 2015, from County Counsel informing us that the draft petition was legally acceptable. The petition was mailed to the chief petitioner on July 31, 2015, for circulation within the petition area. Staff is informed that signatures have been gathered, but not yet presented for signature verification, as the petitioners negotiate with the district. A joint committee appointed by both the district and the City of Malibu has released a study addressing the implications of this petition. Staff is reviewing this study.

Status: Petitioners in negotiation.
Status Date: March 18, 2016

**PETITION TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TRUSTEES FROM FIVE TO SEVEN WITHIN THE POMONA USD**

On April 8, 2015, LACOE received a request for a petition pursuant to EC §5020 to increase the number of trustees from five to seven within the Pomona USD. The request was submitted by chief petitioner Mr. John Mendoza. The petition was forwarded to County Counsel to determine its legal compliance regarding format and content. On April 27, 2015, County Counsel deemed the petition sufficient. Staff returned the petition to the chief petitioner on April 29, 2015, for circulation.

This is a separate petition, distinct from the other petitions requested by Mr. Mendoza, and requests some of the same changes within the Pomona Unified School District (the addition of two governing board members). It was submitted under EC §5020(c) and, based on the number of registered voters in the Pomona USD, requires valid signatures from at least 10% of the registered voters within the petition area. If valid and certified by the County Committee, this petition would trigger a vote within the district, before which the County Committee may hold one or more public hearings on the proposal.

Status: Petitioner is gathering signatures.
Status Date: *July 10, 2019*
FORMATION—ALTADENA USD (CURRENTLY LIES WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE PASADENA USD)

On January 17, 2006, LACOE received a request for a petition from chief petitioners Ms. Maurice Morse, Ms. Shirlee Smith, and Mr. Bruce Wasson, three community members who are residents of the area known as Altadena. The chief petitioners want to form an Altadena USD from territory within the boundaries of the Pasadena USD. The petition request was returned to the chief petitioners on January 20, 2006, because it lacked an adequate description of the area pursuant to EC §35700.3.

On February 10, 2006, LACOE received a revised request for a petition. Staff reviewed the request and forwarded a draft petition to County Counsel on February 22, 2006, for a legal compliance review regarding format and content. We received notification on March 6, 2006, from County Counsel informing us that the draft petition was legally acceptable.

On March 7, 2006, staff forwarded the draft petition to the Registrar-Recorder for verification that the description of the proposed boundaries of the Altadena USD was sufficiently clear (so registered voters residing within the proposed petition area could be identified with specificity). The Registrar-Recorder confirmed that the description was sufficient on March 10, 2006.

The petition was mailed to the chief petitioners on March 14, 2006, for circulation within the petition area. The Registrar-Recorder estimated the chief petitioners must collect approximately 7,000 valid signatures to meet the criteria set forth in EC §35700(a).

On September 23, 2010, chief petitioners delivered signed petitions to LACOE. Staff submitted the petitions to the Registrar-Recorder on September 27, 2010, for signature verification. On October 22, 2010, the Registrar-Recorder notified staff there were insufficient valid signatures (less than the required 25 percent of the registered voters within the petition area). Staff notified the chief petitioners of the insufficiency, and at Mr. Wasson’s request, returned the petitions to the Registrar-Recorder for a signature audit. Staff also advised the chief petitioner regarding the collection of additional signatures. Upon notification by the Registrar-Recorder of a sufficient number of valid signatures, staff will present the petition to the County Committee at the next regular meeting.

On January 4, 2011, staff conferred with a representative from the Registrar-Recorder’s office, who informed us that no audit of petition signatures had been done yet, and they clarified the cost of signature verification. On February 15 and March 1, 2011, staff contacted the Registrar-Recorder and were informed that the signature audit had still not been done. On May 12, 2011, staff from the Registrar-Recorder’s office advised LACOE that an audit of the petition’s signatures was underway. On November 28, 2011, the chief petitioner Mr. Wasson notified
LACOE of the death of one of the co-chief petitioners, Ms. Morse. Mr. Wasson stated that another chief petitioner would not be named.

In August of 2014, staff confirmed that petitioner is still interested in collecting additional signatures.

Status: Petition insufficient; chief petitioners may gather additional signatures.
Status Date: December 5, 2011

FORMATION—MALIBU USD (CURRENTLY LIES WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE SANTA MONICA-MALIBU USD)

Status: Petition in circulation.
Status Date: February 21, 2008

FORMATION—LA MIRADA USD (CURRENTLY LIES WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE NORWALK—LA MIRADA USD)

Status: Petition in circulation.
Status Date: March 20, 2007

Unification Proposals/Last Activity Date

- None

Transfer of Territory Proposals/Last Activity Date

- Azusa USD to Glendora USD/October 2016

Formation Proposals/Last Activity Date

- Malibu USD (Santa Monica-Malibu USD)/January 2020

Trustee Areas and Governing Board Size/Last Activity Date

- El Monte City SD / August 2017
- El Monte Union HSD / May 2019
- Garvey SD / September 2019
- *Glendora USD / January 2020
- Pomona USD / July 2019
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- Rowland USD / January 2020
- South Pasadena USD / January 2020
- Torrance USD / July 2018
- Walnut USD / May 2016

* = indicates activity since last meeting

This document was prepared by staff to the County Committee.
The following documents were received on 01-07-20 and 01-21-20:

- 6-page submission from Chief Petitioner (CP) Lasiewicz
- 3-page submission from CPs Karapetian and Lasiewicz
Memorandum
To: Allison Deegan, Ed.D.
Regionalized Business Services Coordinator
Business Advisory Services
Los Angeles County Office of Education

From: Chief Petitioner, Nalini Lasiewicz
Re: Public Comments made at the November 6, 2019 County Committee Meeting
Date: January 7, 2020

I would appreciate you forwarding this to the County Committee members for their review.

In response to the County Committee discussion regarding setting a fair election area, Petitioners submit the viewpoints offered by LCUSD staff, residents of La Canada Flintridge and Chief Petitioners during public comments at the November 6, 2019 meeting.

We are convinced based on precedent decision by this Committee and State Board of Education guidance, that the most appropriate voting block for a ballot measure on an approved transfer Petition would be those most impacted by the decision, i.e., the residents of the Territory itself. The elected representatives of our City and of our School District Governing Board have shown strong support for this transfer Petition through resolutions and testimony over the past six years as we have worked to pursue this transfer. Their support has been widely reported in our local media. We feel strongly that the voters of our City outside of the Territory itself are well represented in this matter, by both their City officials and the LCUSD Board. Therefore, we see no need to go through the expense and added resource commitments to put this matter before the entire voting population of the City of La Canada Flintridge. The more the voting area is expanded outside the Territory the greater the temptation may be to expand the voting area into the unincorporated areas to the west, for the sake of finding an artificial “balance” of overall voter participation.

Attached is a map of the Sphere of Influence for our City which clearly demonstrates that the Territory is an integral part of our City and the only portion of it not benefitting from being in our hometown school district. To quote the longest serving LCUSD school board member Ellen Multari, in her comments to the County Committee in October 2019, “if the districts were being created today, one would never carve out a sliver of a City and align it with the neighboring district. Sagebrush families simply want to be fully vested members of their city and its schools. LCUSD has already enrolled more than half the estimated students within the Territory. We are fully prepared to accept the remaining students seeking to transfer, with all the related responsibilities and obligations.”

Our city residents are fully aware of the need for this territory transfer and the multiple campaigns by the residents to unify our community, dating back generations. Therefore, we feel very confident that the voices of our diverse community are well represented and what remains is to allow the Territory residents to vote on this matter.
**Mark Evans:** Impacts on the Receiving District (LCUSD)

Good morning my name is Mark Evans, I'm Associate Superintendent of Business and Administrative Services for the La Canada Unified School District. I'm here this morning to represent the school district and to reiterate its ongoing support for the petitioners and their efforts to transfer to the La Cañada Unified School District. LCUSD finds value in the capacity of the Territory transfer to strengthen the ties between the La Canada city and school communities and the resulting social capital. As LCUSD has mentioned before, the district will be able to maintain class sizes at current levels; no existing resident or permit students will be disrupted; all Sagebrush students who desire to remain in the GUSD would be released to do so through the inter-district permit process; and LCUSD would incur no negative financial impacts because we have the flexibility and the capacity to accommodate all students affected by the petition. LCUSD also supports the committee finding that the election area be confined to the boundaries of the Territory proposed for transfer as there's a rational basis and precedent for such a decision.

**Dan Jeffries:** Impact on the Territory Residents

Good morning my name is Dan Jeffries. I am a La Canada resident, the father of five kids and a member of the La Cañada Unified School Board. My day job is an attorney and I'm an attorney for the Assistant City Attorney for the City of Los Angeles but I'm not representing the City of Los Angeles or appearing in that capacity, I'm appearing in my own personal capacity this morning. The decision about the voting area should be guided by legal principles and not political issues. There is no property being transferred. There are no new schools being built and for the Sagebrush residents this issue is very significant. It could change where they send their kids to school. It could also subject themselves to taxes as imposed by the parcel tax in the city of La Canada. For any Glendale residents, the impact is tangential and indirect. It is clear that the Sagebrush residents have the most at stake in this decision, so we urge you to follow established legal precedent, the guidance of Education Code section 3579 et seq. and the legislative intent behind these laws. My fellow resident Mr. David Haxton will address those legal issues further. The voters who are directly and significantly impacted by the decision should be the voters who make that decision. This is a very important issue to the residents of Sagebrush and should be decided by those voters.

**David Haxton:** Legal Issues, the Fullerton Case

Good morning my name is David Haxton. I'm a Deputy Attorney General appearing in my personal capacity and I'm talking about the “First Impressions” territory transfer in which the State Board of Education unanimously reversed a County decision as to the election area, setting the election area for the territory to be transferred only. That was 20 years ago and I was involved in that case because the Chief Petitioner was a co-worker of mine. He came and asked for help. And so a month ago, when you made your decision I saw in the newspaper I said that's the exact same issue that they're going to be dealing with and so I collected information about the First Impressions territory transfer case and I submitted it to the petitioners. I haven't previously been involved in this at all and let me first give a little context.
It used to be that the election areas were by default just the territory to be transferred. In 1982 the State Supreme Court in the Fullerton case found it unconstitutional that the entire district didn’t get to vote and so that changed everything so the default then became the entire district.

But then in 1992 the State Supreme Court, again in a Sacramento County case involving the formation of a city, Sacramento County complained that they were going to lose a lot of money by the city being formed. The State Supreme Court said, no it’s okay for just the territory to vote and everybody kind of thought that they were going to lose because of the Fullerton case ten years ago. But the State Supreme Court said no, that that had to do with race, you know, if race isn’t involved then it’s not critical that anybody be voting that the entire district vote. In the First Impressions case, it was very similar to this. A hundred townhomes wanted to transfer, everybody opposed it. The committee approved it but then they set the election area for the entire district that was losing the territory. On appeal it was reversed ....it was just the territory. Thank you very much.

**Scott Tracy:** LAFCO and State Board of Education

Good morning I'm Scott Tracy, sincerely thanking you for acknowledging the merits of our petition as your predecessors did in 1979 and again in '91. Your final action is to establish the Election Area. Today, a court case known as LAFCO which Mr. Haxton referred to provides legal precedence observed by the State Board that elections may be limited to the boundaries of the Territory proposed for transfer, known as the “default area” and for the last decade the State Board has uniformly selected the default area as the election area since none of these concerns was found to be significant — race, encouraging future piecemeal transfers, effect on voters and financial impact on districts. So, in the 14 appeals heard by the State Board in the last decade, no election area was expanded. And nothing in our petition gives rise to any of those four concerns just mentioned. Your approval of our petition signifies there was no significant concern regarding race or fiscal impact of the district. There’s nothing in our petition promoting future piecemeal transfers given the relatively small number of students to transfer. LCUSD’s commitment to accept all students being fully within La Cañada City boundaries while being the only section of the City not included in the hometown school district and Glendale would continue to serve 100% of the residents of the City of Glendale and the unincorporated communities of La Crescenta and Montrose.

So that leaves only the impact on the voter. The only voter significantly impacted is the Territory voter who would inherit a $450.00 parcel tax. If the election area were expanded, non-Territory residents could potentially impose a tax on others while not being subject themselves. The California State Board is the ultimate arbiter, provides you with clear guidance and case histories you determine our election area. Thank you for your support, everybody.

**Nick Karapetian:** LAFCO and State Board of Education

Thank you everybody. First and foremost, I’m one of the chief petitioners; I want to thank all of you for your time & dedication and the staff for the last three years. This has been a long process and we’re, I think, at the tail end of it. As Scott mentioned the CDE and State Board use the Territory as the default election area unless it was not rational
to do so because of four possible concerns: those relating to racial concerns, future encouragement of piecemeal transfer, a significant fiscal impact of the district and impact on voters. By approving the petition that Scott mentioned, this Committee has already evaluated under the conditions and determined that the first three concerns do not apply to this transfer.

The only remaining possible concern would be impact on voters. So in this case, the facts strongly suggest minimal impact on non-Territory voters. Over 50% of the students have already moved from GUSD to LCUSD with little or no negative impact to area schools and neighboring communities. Moreover, after transfer non-Territory property owners will not be subject to any new type of tax.

In contrast, Territory voters will be much more impacted after a transfer because Sagebrush families and children will be the only ones changing school districts and Sagebrush homeowners will be the only ones paying a new tax - the $450 LCUSD parcel tax. Therefore, to expand the election area beyond Sagebrush would allow non-Territory residents to decide the destiny of Sagebrush students and also give them the ability to have a say on taxing others while not being subject to the same tax themselves. We hope this Committee finds the track record of the State Board over the last decade to not expand the election area beyond the Territory gives you clear direction & guidance on the issue. Based on that and the additional facts presented here, we respectfully ask that you set the Territory as the election area since there are no compelling reasons that justify expanding. Thank you for your time today.

Nalini Lasiewicz: Precedent of the recent Wiseburn decision

Good afternoon my name is Nalini Lasiewicz, I'm a Chief Petitioner. And, another item in our recent petition summary that you have before you which supports the election area being limited is this committee’s decision in the 2016 Wiseburn territory Transfer Petition, where this Committee voted to designate only the territory as the election area. In Wiseburn, staff cited three factors why the election area should be limited: one, low number of students to transfer; an inherited additional tax on the transferred area; and the full support of the receiving district. Comparing that petition to ours indicates no significant difference between the two. Since those same factors hold true in our petition, the same conclusion should hold true in the election area to be set as the Territory itself. And just to summarize it, this Committee has determined that this transfer’s impacts would be less than significant and with the precedents that have been cited already on the State Board level we ask you to designate the Territory as the election area.

I also wanted to recognize that on November 4th 1976 the Sagebrush residents were part of a 72% election that approved the incorporation of our City of La Cañada Flintridge. We have now waited 43 years for the final puzzle of that vote. Some of the people in the audience here voted to incorporate. Once you become a City it's a little different and with all due respect to Mr. Ogaz, I just wanted to reiterate that our city welcomes us, loves us, reaches out to us but we don’t have a Parks & Recreation Department. Our schools of La Canada are the glue that holds our community together and this is why the residents have been fighting, literally for 40 years to get this done. We appreciate you helping us out.
**Pat Anderson:** 1992 Petition, Census data and Impact on the Nearest GUSD School

Good morning my name is Pat Anderson, I'm the president and CEO of the La Cañada Flintridge Chamber of Commerce. When the 1992 petition for transfer was before this Committee, staff recommended the election area to be limited to the transfer Territory itself because the large election area would overwhelm the voters in the transfer area who were directly affected. I compared the registered voter census data in the Crescenta Valley High School attendance area and the La Cañada High School and found the ratio of voters was approximately two to one over La Cañada, similar to 1992. Since GUSD has not recently made any substantiated claims of significant impacts to its educational programs, much less the likelihood of a school closure, neither the adjacent neighborhoods nor the school has been significantly affected. In fact, enrollment at Mountain Avenue is at a 13-year high this year. That suggests that non-Territory residents have only an incidental interest here which provides rationale to not expand the election area beyond the Territory. I thank you very much for your time.

**Martin Cresmer:** Tax Burden on the Territory

Good morning to the members of Committee and staff. My name is Martin Cresmer. I'm a resident of the Sagebrush territory and a taxpayer. The GUSD has asserted that a four to five-dollar annual increase in the tax burden of their taxpayers represents an undue burden upon them. I'd like to make mention of the fact that residents of the Sagebrush territory face that increase in our tax of 100 times that. So, in that regard it seems more reasonable to me that the residents of the Sagebrush territory should have the most say in this regard. Going back to the 1992 petition the parcel tax was not in effect so it really wasn't a part of the consideration in the decision that was made, yet staff during that time recommended that the election consists of only the transferred area, the residents of the transfer area being part of that election now that there is a tax in place it seems more reasonable to follow staff's prior recommendations. I can tell you that by not expanding the election area, what you're going to avoid is the conundrum of determining what equal representation of voters is when the tax itself wouldn't be equally applied.

Lastly, I say that Sagebrush residents would be the most impacted by the outcome of this election and should therefore have strongest voice in that election. So, members of the Committee I urge you to limit the election area to the Sagebrush territory and I'd like to thank you and the staff members for their time.

Encl: City of La Cañada Flintridge, Sphere of Influence
Yellow arrow delineates eastern boundary of Territory (within City of LCF)
Memorandum
To: Allison Deegan, Ed.D.
Regionalized Business Services Coordinator
Business Advisory Services
Los Angeles County Office of Education

From: Chief Petitioners, Nick Karapetian & Nalini Lasiewicz
Re: Submission of Public Comments at the January 8, 2020 County Committee Meeting
Date: January 21, 2020

We would appreciate you forwarding this to the County Committee members for their review in the meeting packet for the next-scheduled Feb 5, 2020 meeting.

In previous submissions and testimony made to the County Committee (CC), Petitioners have provided detailed rationale for setting the election area for our long-awaited ballot measure on the Territory Transfer to be limited to the most-impacted voters, namely those who live in the Territory itself. Below are comments by former LCUSD Board President Scott Tracy in summarizing our rationale for a limited election area made before the CC at its January 8, 2020 meeting.

At the same meeting, Co-Chief Petitioner Nick Karapetian requested that the administrative record of the CC proceedings, to be prepared by staff and provided to the State Board, include the Petitioners’ response to the (premature) appeal filed by GUSD, assuming that Petitioners’ response is provided to staff prior to the closing of the administrative record.

Additionally, Petitioners request that we be provided an update from CC or staff on the status of our Petition and what further deliberations and actions are foreseen in the CC completing its due process. Specifically, we request clarification on any impact to the timely completion of the CC process arising from the lawsuit that GUSD has filed challenging the Committee’s approval of the CEQA IS/MND.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Co-Chief Petitioners Nick Karapetian and Nalini Lasiewicz

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Public Comments made at the Jan 8, 2020 CC Meeting

Speaker: Scott Tracy

Good Morning, Happy New Year and congratulations to the newly elected Committee members and the newly elected chair.

I’m Scott Tracy. In 2013, I was the president of the La Canada school board when this petition first surfaced – seven years ago.

Last October [2019], this Committee gave final approval to transfer the Sagebrush territory from Glendale Unified to La Canada.
Today, La Cañada Unified has 227 Sagebrush students enrolled in its schools. No increase in costs related to facilities have been incurred and small classes have been fully maintained. And, enrollment at Glendale’s most impacted school - Mountain Avenue Elementary - is at a 14-year high.

Your final action related to this petition is to set the election area – a decision no less critical to a balanced and thoughtful outcome than your deliberations that preceded it.

Petitioners have provided information - included at the back of your meeting packet - regarding the number of registered voters within the attendance boundaries of the two affected high schools.

The number of registered voters within Crescenta Valley High School boundaries is double those residing within La Canada High School boundaries.

Choosing these two high school boundaries as the election area would result in a predetermined outcome and would be tantamount to approving the petition, then taking it away.

Clearly, the most-affected parties to this transfer are the Sagebrush homeowners who would incur a 450-dollar parcel tax – an amount 100 times greater than a 4-to-5-dollar property tax increase for GUSD taxpayers.

By the way, despite the protestations of the GUSD attorney, GUSD voters duly approved that school bond and the related tax has not – and will not – exceed the “promised” $60 per $100,000 of AV.

This Committee has the benefit of precedence, having established the Wiseburn territory as its election area. The same factors that were considered in that election area decision are relevant here.

Finally, as Michael Kirst, legendary chair of the State Board of Ed for many years, advised his fellow board members in 2018, “if you want the property transfer, then you want an election that is most likely to bring that about.”

Thank you.

Speaker: Nick Karapetian

Good morning, my name is Nick Karapetian, one of the chief petitioners in the Sagebrush Territory Transfer from Glendale to La Canada Unified

In addition to wishing all the new members congratulations, I wanted to address two items today... one relating to Glendale Unified’s Appeal to the State Board of this Committee’s approval of our petition and the other their lawsuit seeking to overturn your adoption of the CEQA findings.

Regarding GUSD’s appeal to the State Board, we are in the process of preparing a response to their “Statement of Reasons” which was submitted to Staff in late
November. We intend to be as succinct as possible in our responses to their assertions by referral to the documents we’ve already submitted while focusing on the continuing false narratives and latest extreme hyperbole from Glendale Unified.

Once submitted, we request that staff include our response to GUSD’s statement of reasons in the administrative record provided to the state.

With regard to GUSD’s lawsuit, Petitioners have stated before that we believe the level of analysis in the CEQA review was appropriate and we support this Committee’s unanimous adoption of its findings. We are hopeful and confident that in the lawsuit your Attorneys will vigorously defend both the CEQA review process and its findings.

Regardless of the lawsuit, we expected this Committee to render a decision on the election area at this meeting. However, we were recently informed by Staff that our Petition would not be on the agenda today due to the lawsuit filed by Glendale. We are here to ask for clarification as to the status of our Petition before this Committee and when we can expect it to be completed and finalized. Is it on permanent hold until the GUSD lawsuit is resolved and if so, why?

We would greatly appreciate an answer to this question.